

OTHER NOTICES

Demerec, M. (Editor). *The Mammalian Fetus: Physiological Aspects of Development*. Cold Spring Harbor Symposia on Quantitative Biology, Volume XIX. Cold Spring Harbor, L.I., New York, 1954. The Biological Laboratory. Pp. xii + 225. Price \$8.00.

THERE is a widespread but rarely explicit feeling that, in the case of mammals, the "environment" does not seriously impinge on the organism until after birth; it is felt that the mammalian foetus is protected by the shelter of the uterus and its embryonic membranes to such an extent that, with a few exceptions (such as serological incompatibility between mother and foetus), its environment can be regarded as constant and hence that it can be disregarded. Nothing is further from the truth. The intra-uterine environment is part of the maternal physiology and consequently may undergo considerable changes. Its study is of increasing importance for the human geneticist, as it is now clear that many cases and types of congenital defect cannot be ascribed to genetic causes in the ordinary sense; they must thus, in one way or another, be caused by the pre-natal environment. The volume under review is of value in many ways to the mammalian and human geneticist. Of particular interest is a paper by S. Gluecksohn-Waelsch in which she summarizes the work of L. C. Dunn and herself on the developmental genetics of a group of mutants affecting the axial skeleton of the mouse; a contribution by L. B. Russell and W. L. Russell on "Pathways of Radiation Effects in the Mother and the Embryo" based on irradiation experiments of pregnant mouse females and thus raising the whole problem of phenocopies; and a paper by Alfred Jost, "Hormonal Factors in the Development of the Fetus", in which the author describes the results of his excellent experiments involving surgical interference with the foetus. Space forbids to mention all the other twenty-four contributions though many of them are of obvious importance to the human geneticist.

H. G.

FAO/UN. *The State of Food and Agriculture, Review and Outlook*. Rome, 1954. FAO. Pp. vi + 157. Price 7s. 6d.

THIS 157 page work is the annual compilation put out by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. The format is convenient: Foreword; Summary; World Review and Outlook; Regional Problems and Policies; Review and Outlook by Commodities. This is the annual audit of the business of human life, the yearly balance sheet of the dynamic relationship of

human numbers to agricultural and fishery production. The web of cause and effect, of effort and laxity, of life and death, of economics, charity, and trade, flows everlastingly. The global balance at the end of July 1954 was a tiny increase of total organic production compared with human mouths to be filled, together with a continuation, even an accentuation, of those discrepancies between the areas of fortunate abundance and of discouraging shortage. This is the year to year detail of biological history in progress. Some decades, or a century, hence the eugenicist and the demographer will take up these annual reports from F.A.O. and understand how it all happened. But the time has not yet come for prophecy to be either sufficiently well based or to be acceptable.

G. C. L. B.

French, Eleanor. *Prostitution*. British Social Biology Council, Occasional Paper No. 8, 1955. Pp. 12. Price 1s. 6d.

THE increased awareness of social problems which has characterized the century has only recently enabled sexual problems to be openly and unself-consciously discussed. Now, indeed, there is a demand for authentic facts which outstrips the supply, and a great need not only for further investigation but also for the means of passing on to the public the results of such investigation; for how can significant reforms be introduced without the backing of an interested and well informed public. As regards prostitution the outstanding contribution of T. E. James (*Prostitution and the Law*, Heinemann, 1951) has now been complemented by a field study carried out by the British Social Biology Council (*Women of the Streets*, Secker and Warberg, 1955). No doubt drawing on the experience gained through this study, Mrs. Eleanor French, who was until recently the secretary of that Council, has written a twelve-page pamphlet with the object of giving "some reliable information to the general reader" on the problem of female prostitution. One can only say that she succeeds very well.

She outlines the relevant law, touches on the magnitude of the problem so far as it is known, and in non-technical language, draws a pen picture of the prostitute indicating the difficulties to be overcome in tackling her problem. The author indicates how prostitution overlaps other social problems such as overcrowded homes, the marriage rate and marital disharmony, inadequate education, the genesis of maladjustment in children and the neglect of illegitimate children. The indirect approach to the problem is thus likely to be the most hopeful.

In suggesting that we should make the conditions of her profession as difficult for her as

possible, it is to be hoped that we shall not unwittingly be encouraging the "call-girl system" for then the young newcomer would be more difficult to ascertain, the established prostitute less likely to tire of the hardships of independent activity, and the whole problem more difficult to assess and control. P. D. SCOTT.

Medica. *Any Wife or Any Husband.* Second Edition.* London, 1955. Heinemann Medical Books. Pp. 147. Price 10s.

"A book for couples who have met sexual difficulties and for doctors"—but one that should reach a far wider public than this, especially those in charge of young children and adolescents. There are three main points which need to be stressed, and this can be done in the author's own words:

(1) "It would be much better for all if there were wider education about matters of this sort. . . . If it were widely known that such tendencies could be medically treated, society would be spared many distressing incidents. . . . Fortunately in both sexes, severe difficulties are rare; but they call for much wider public understanding and sympathy."

(2) "Whether or not there is an inherited tendency to sexual deviation is not proven. . . . In fact, ways may be found of bringing up children which could spare them later deviations of every sort."

(3) "Sadism, however well disguised as conventional punishment, is likely to induce highly inflammable reactions among a group of celibate adolescents. . . . A craving for the excitement of flagellation can be started by witnessing school beatings."

This wise book should indeed be in the hands of all parents and schoolmasters. Perhaps a special leaflet for them could be produced by the author of this book and widely disseminated?

URSULA GRANT DUFF.

Milbank Memorial Fund. *The Biology of Mental Health and Disease.* London, 1952. Cassell. Pp. xxv+654. Price 75s.

This is a report of the twenty-seventh annual conference of the Milbank Memorial Fund and is a collection of thirty-eight papers dealing with all aspects of the biology of mental health and disease, including one in which R. Ruggles Gates, writing on "Genetics and Normal Mental Differences", is followed by a discussion by James V. Neel; Franz J. Kallman writes on "Genetic Aspects of Psychoses", with special reference to twins, and is followed by "Counseling in Human Genetics", by Sheldon C. Reed and Jan A. Böök.

H. Lehmann contributes papers on "Niacin Therapy in Psychotic States" and "Nitrous Oxide

Inhalation as an Adjunct Therapy", and Ralph W. Gerard sums up the conference in "A Final Glance at the Symposium".

Lists of references follow each paper, there is a copious index running to twenty-nine pages and the book is beautifully produced.

Muckermann, Hermann. *Vom Sein und Sollen des Menschen.* Berlin-Wilmersdorf, 1954. Westliche Berliner Verlagsgesellschaft. Pp. 844. Price not stated.

WE have received (too late to be adequately reviewed in this issue) Professor Hermann Muckermann's monumental work *Vom Sein und Sollen des Menschen* (Concerning the Present and Future of Mankind) based on lectures on natural and psychological scientific anthropology to the Technical University of Berlin-Charlottenburgh and to the Free University of Berlin-Dahlem.

On the blurb, "concerning the meaning of this book," Professor Muckermann compares himself to Thorwaldsen, who said that he was born in 1797, "before which time he had not lived," whereas in reality he was born in 1768. The date given by him was the day of his awakening to Greek antiquity, and his dedication to true artistic creation; likewise, Professor Muckermann feels that his own devotion to the science and cause of human destiny marked a new birthday in his life.

Facing pp. 80 and 81 are fine reproductions of the portraits of Charles Darwin and Francis Galton, presented to him by this Society before the second World War, and on pp. 95 and 96 he explains the relationship of these two great men; facing p. 104, he gives the family pedigree which embraces both. He is evidently thrilled by its ramifications and eugenic value and does not exclude the women who were their mothers. I look forward to reading this fascinating book and to writing more about it in the next number of the REVIEW.

URSULA GRANT DUFF.

Terman, Lewis M. *Scientists and Nonscientists in a Group of 800 Gifted Men.* The American Psychological Association Inc. Washington, D.C. *Psychological Monographs*, No. 378. Vol. 68, No. 7.

THIS is an intensive study from childhood in 1921-2 up to 1951 of a group said to be the only one of its kind to be studied over so long a period with the object of searching for variables which would differentiate between those destined to become scientists and the non-scientists. In addition it was attempted to separate the different "kinds" of scientists. The religious interests of the fathers of the subjects of the investigation failed to reach the accepted level of significance, but the author points out that this lack may be due to the wording of the questionnaires, where such matters were included under the hardly

* First edition reviewed by Dr. Alex Comfort. EUGENICS REVIEW, 1951. 43, 47.

appropriate heading of "Interests and hobbies". Many valuable suggestions are made which should be noted and incorporated in any study of a similar nature carried out in the future.

C. W. USHER.

Terman, Lewis M. *The Discovery and Encouragement of Exceptional Talent.* Reprinted from *The American Psychologist*, June 1954, Vol. 9, No. 6.

THIS is the first of a series of annual lectures financed from the estate of the late W. Van Dyke Bingham for the purpose of encouraging "the discovery and development of exceptional abilities and capacities". The lecturer led a team in a number of investigations to determine whether early ability is a reliable guide to later distinction.

Frequently they met the view "Early ripe early rot", but their conclusions were quite the reverse, outstanding ability at six, eight or ten years invariably leading to distinction in some direction, but it was not possible to foretell which direction it would take. Moreover, with the highly gifted it was possible to detect a lower incidence of ill-health, early mortality, alcoholism and insanity. The early recognition of outstanding ability is important in order that the maximum training can be achieved before the period of maximum creative ability is reached—usually between twenty-five and thirty-five. No support is found for the view that great achievement usually stems from emotional tensions bordering on the abnormal, success being associated with well-balanced temperaments free from excessive frustrations.

C. W. USHER.

PERIODICALS

American Journal of Human Genetics

December 1954, Vol. 6, No. 4—*The Genetic Basis of Various Types of Ichthyosis in a Family Group*—By Helen Ollendorff Curth and Madge T. Macklin—An illustrated account is given of the clinical and histological findings in two brothers with ichthyosis hystrix. Features of different clinical forms of ichthyosis present simultaneously in these patients and comparisons with published cases are drawn. An investigation into seventy-five family-members on the mother's side revealed several showing "faulty keratinization" of varying degree. Evidence is given in favour of a single dominant gene with varying expressivity and greater penetrance in the male. An interesting point is that, had the mild cases been overlooked in this family, a sex-linked recessive pattern of inheritance would have emerged.

The Correlation Between Parents and Offspring in a Random Mating Population—By C. C. Li—The author shows how generalized expressions may be found for the correlation between one or both parents and one or more children, in considering a character measured additively.

A Genetic Study of Progressive Spinal Muscular Atrophy—By Ntinios C. Myrianthopoulos and Ian A. Brown—In presenting two families with progressive spinal muscular atrophy, the authors first briefly describe the syndrome, giving three main variants. They then review heredofamilial cases in the literature. Within the limitations imposed by interpreting published work—particularly where there is variable clinical expression in any case—dominant inheritance seems to be

the rule. Allowing for "differential expressivity" of the gene, this is true also for the two new pedigrees.

A Method of Estimating the Frequency of Abnormal Autosomal Recessive Genes in Man—By Herman M. Slatk—First cousins will on an average both be heterozygous for one-sixteenth of all the abnormal autosomal recessive genes shared by their common grandparents. Therefore, as shown in this method, the number of recessive conditions appearing in the progeny of first cousin matings should indicate the number of abnormal genes for which the grandparent (or any average person) is heterozygous. For this latter number the author's estimate is eight.

Hereditary Multiple Exostoses—By J. Floyd Cannon—Two new families of hereditary multiple exostoses are described. The inheritance is dominant with reduced penetrance in the female. (Known female carriers may show no sign of the condition.)

Tables and Nomogram for Calculating Chances of Excluding Paternity—By William C. Boyd—Tables and examples are given of the probabilities of excluding paternity, on the basis of blood groups for different gene-frequencies (that is, in different populations). Independent probabilities are combined by using the nomogram.

A Familial Study of Gastric Carcinoma—By George W. Hagy—In an attempt to determine the significance of heredity in this disease, the incidence of different types of cancer in the near relatives of proved cases of gastric carcinoma was compared with that found in a control group, and with the